

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 00449 210806Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4509
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0449

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR,IS, XF
SUBJECT: MFA REACTION TO SADAT/HUSSEIN MEETING AND ASSAD'S TIME
INTERVIEW

1. IN A DISCUSSION JANUARY 19 Yael Vered, Director of Middle Eastern Affairs at the MFA, said that the statement issued at the conclusion of the Sadat-Hussein meeting means that Sadat has recognized that Jordan must be included in the Arab Peace Offensive. By his agreement to the Aswan Statement Hussein has ensured Jordan's re-entry as a participant in any future negotiations.

2. Vered believed that Sadat gained more than Hussein in their discussions: his position as the Arab leader who sets the tone for negotiations was reinforced. Hussein accepted, at least in a pro-forma way, a reiteration of the Rabat position that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinians. Vered went on to say that while it is possible that
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 00449 210806Z

Sadat was attempting to create a rift between Jordan and Syria, what the two leaders apparently were trying to do was to find a formula which keeps open the option of a Palestinian state as well as the option of a connection between that state and Jordan.

EM speaking on Assad's time interview, Vered com-

PARED HIS STATEMENT THERE THAT 1977 WILL NOT BE A YEAR OF DECISION, BUT ONLY THE BEGINNING OF THE PROCESS, TO THE EARLIER AGREEMENT BETWEEN ASSAD AND SADAT THAT GENEVA SHOULD BE RE-CONVENED BY MARCH 1977. SHE SAID THAT ISRAEL HAD NOTED ASSAD'S STATEMENT THAT IF THE PLO DOES NOT GO TO GENEVA, THE PEACE PROCESS CAN CONTINUE ANYWAY; THE RECENT STATEMENT BY FAHMY FAVORING SEPARATE ARAB DELEGATIONS AT GENEVA SHOWS THAT THE EGYPTIANS AND SYRIANS ARE STILL IN DISAGREEMENT ON THIS ISSUE. ACCORDING TO THE TEXT OF THE INTERVIEW SHE HAD SEEN, ASSAD SPOKE ABOUT THE POSSIBLE CONNECTION BETWEEN A PALESTINIAN STATE AND JORDAN; WHEN ASKED ABOUT A POSSIBLE CONNECTION OF SUCH A STATE WITH SYRIA HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT DISCUSSED THIS NOR THOUGHT ABOUT IT. "WE THINK THAT HE DOES THINK ABOUT IT," VERED SAID. SHE ALSO SAID THAT ISRAEL HAD NOTED A NEW ELEMENT IN HIS INTERVIEW WHICH WAS THAT THE SYRIANS WERE WILLING TO SIGN A "PEACE DOCUMENT" WITH ISRAEL. ALSO OF INTEREST TO ISRAEL WAS HIS REITERATION OF A STATEMENT HE HAD NOT MADE FOR SOMETIME, NAMELY, THAT HE IS READY TO ACCEPT DEMILITARIZATION OF A NARROW STRIP IN THE GOLAN HEIGHTS WHICH WOULD BE POLICED BY U.N. FORCES.

4. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION ON THE SAME DAY WITH SHLOMO AVINERI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MFA, HE DISCUSSED RECENT ARAB STATEMENT IN A MORE GENERAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 00449 210806Z

WAY. HE TOLD US THAT HE SEES A PROCESS EVOLVING IN THE ARAB WORLD AND BELIEVES THAT ARAB THINKING IS MOVING IN A GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE DIRECTION. ISRAEL WILL DO NOTHING TO GIVE THE ARABS REASON TO SLOW DOWN, LET ALONE REVERSE, THIS PROCESS. ISRAEL IS GENERALLY ENCOURAGED BY THE GROWING TENDENCY FOR JORDAN TO BE ACCEPTED AGAIN AS A PARTICIPANT IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS. HE NOTED THAT WHEN FORMER HEBRON MAYOR JA'ABARI RETURNED FROM AMMAN, PRO-HKJ SLOGANS WERE HEARD FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE WEST BANK SINCE 1967. AVINERI SAID THAT THE GOI WILL SPEAK OUT REGARDING THIS PROCESS FROM TIME TO TIME AND THAT RABIN'S SPEECH TO WIZO ON JANUARY 9 (WHEN HE SAID THAT 1977 WILL NOT BE A YEAR OF DIPLOMATIC MAGIC--SEE TEL AVIV 205) WAS ONE SUCH EXAMPLE. HOWEVER, ISRAEL WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO REPLY OR RESPOND TO EVERY STATEMENT OR INTERVIEW BY ARAB LEADERS IN THE WEEKS AHEAD. DUNNIGAN

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